

JANUARY 26, 2011.

Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,
Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington,
DC 20515.

DEAR SPEAKER BOEHNER: This letter is to notify you that as of close of business today I am resigning as the Ranking Member of the Committee on Ethics.

Sincerely,

ZOE LOFGREN,
Member of Congress.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the resignation is accepted. There was no objection.

RESIGNATION AS MEMBER OF COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following resignation as a member of the Committee on Small Business:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
Washington, DC, January 26, 2011.

Speaker of the House JOHN BOEHNER,
U.S. Capitol,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER BOEHNER: This letter is to advise you that, effective today, I am taking a leave of absence from the Committee on Small Business until my tenure on the Committee on the Budget is completed. It is my understanding from Clause C of Rule 19 of the Democratic Caucus rules (referenced below) that I will continue to accrue seniority during the leave of absence, at the same rate as if I had continued to serve on the Committee on Small Business.

Rule 19, Clause C: "Any Member of the Committee on the Budget shall be entitled to take a leave of absence from service on any committee or subcommittee during the period he or she serves on the Budget Committee and seniority rights of such Member on such committee and on each subcommittee to which such Member was assigned at the time shall be fully protected as if such Member had continued to so serve during the period of the leave of absence."

Accompanying this letter is a letter from the Democratic Leader verifying that my seniority on the Committee on Small Business will continue to accrue during my absence.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

HEATH SHULER,
Member of Congress.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the resignation is accepted. There was no objection.

ELECTING MEMBERS TO CERTAIN STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Democratic Caucus, I offer a privileged resolution and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 62

Resolved, That the following named Members be and are hereby elected to the following standing committees of the House of Representatives:

(1) COMMITTEE ON ETHICS.—Ms. Linda T. Sánchez of California, Ms. Hirono, Mr. Yarmuth, Ms. Edwards, and Mr. Pierluisi.

(2) COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS.—Mr. Peters, Mr. Owens, and Mr. Keating.

(3) COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS.—Mr. Donnelly of Indiana, Mr. Walz of Minnesota, Mr. Barrow, and Mr. Carnahan.

Mr. BECERRA (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be considered as read and printed in the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 11 of rule X, clause 11 of rule I, and the order of the House of January 5, 2011, the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment of the following Members of the House to the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence:

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Maryland
Mr. THOMPSON, California
Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Illinois
Mr. LANGEVIN, Rhode Island
Mr. SCHIFF, California
Mr. BOREN, Oklahoma
Mr. GUTIERREZ, Illinois
Mr. CHANDLER, Kentucky

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO BOARD OF REGENTS OF THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to sections 5580 and 5581 of the revised statutes (20 U.S.C. 42-43), and the order of the House of January 5, 2011, the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment of the following Members of the House to the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution:

Mr. JOHNSON, Texas
Mr. LATOURETTE, Ohio

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO UNITED STATES GROUP OF THE NATO PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 1928a, clause 10 of rule I, and the order of the House of January 5, 2011, the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment of the following Members of the House to the United States Group of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly:

Mr. TURNER, Ohio, Chairman
Mr. SHIMKUS, Illinois
Mr. SHUSTER, Pennsylvania
Mr. MILLER, Florida
Mrs. EMERSON, Missouri
Ms. GRANGER, Texas
Mr. BILIRAKIS, Florida

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO HOUSE DEMOCRACY PARTNERSHIP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 4(a) of House Resolution 5, 112th Congress, and the order of the House of January 5, 2011, the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment of

the following Members of the House to the House Democracy Partnership:

Mr. DREIER, California, Chairman
Mr. FORTENBERRY, Nebraska
Mrs. BIGGERT, Illinois
Mr. CONAWAY, Texas
Mr. BUCHANAN, Florida
Mr. BOUSTANY, Louisiana
Mr. WILSON, South Carolina
Mr. ROSKAM, Illinois
Mr. CRENSHAW, Florida
Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Florida

APPOINTMENT AS DIRECTOR OF CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 201(a)(2) of the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 601), and the order of the House of January 5, 2011, the Chair announces that the Speaker and President pro tempore of the Senate hereby jointly appoint Dr. Douglas W. Elmendorf as Director of the Congressional Budget Office for the term expiring January 3, 2015.

NATIONAL SCHOOL CHOICE WEEK

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, this week, January 23 to 29, is National School Choice Week. Earlier this week in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, students, parents, and legislators from both parties and varying walks of life, from across the commonwealth, gather to rally for school choice in the State capitol.

Every day, tens of thousands of children attend schools where quality education is not being offered. Meanwhile, those that defend the status quo claim that, if we just do more of the same, at some point schools will improve. Throughout the laboratories of democracy in this great Nation, concerned parents are moving forward with a different vision which is better for our children.

So as we continue in this new 112th Congress, let's make a commitment for America's parents that they will not be forced to send their children to low-quality schools without other choices. Let's provide parents with options, whether they are public, private, charter, home, or cyber schools, for the education that is the best fit for their children.

Children don't have the luxury of waiting for change. For today's students, reform only works if it takes place while they are still in school.

I commend those back home that are standing up for our children. And I will do in my part here in Washington to support their efforts, not just this week, but always, in order to ensure that each child has the opportunity to live up to his or her individual learning potential.

□ 1420

A PLAN FOR DEFICIT REDUCTION

(Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, just a few minutes ago, this House voted to eliminate one of the anchors of democracy: allowing Americans to check off on their IRS filing form \$3—just \$3—to promote and support the democratic process of electing the President of the United States, all in the name of deficit reduction.

But deficit reduction doesn't work without a plan. It doesn't work without thinking about the many State Departments of Transportation that can no longer fix the highways and freeways in your community; or that can promote rail mobility in order to take cars off the road; or that can, in fact, keep the doors of community colleges open; or that can support primary education while State legislatures are struggling to find resources to provide for teachers and students.

So let me say this: I want to work with you on deficit reduction. In fact, I've done it before but not without a plan. I believe that investing in the infrastructure of America is a plan that will allow jobs to be created. That's the serious way of dealing with moving America forward and allowing for the genius of America—having a plan that responds to building America and not making false projections about saving money.

HONORING SHERIFF JAMES A. ALDERDEN

(Mr. GARDNER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Sheriff James A. Alderden. Sheriff Alderden served as Sheriff of Larimer County in my congressional district from January, 1999, until his recent retirement on January 10, 2011.

Sheriff Alderden served the State of Colorado in various capacities prior to becoming Sheriff of Larimer County. His resume includes periods of work for the Colorado Bureau of Investigations, the Colorado State University Police Department, as well as the Steamboat Springs Police Department. His career is a shining example of dedication to the State of Colorado.

In addition to having a great sense of humor, he is a leader. He has great respect and gives his colleagues great respect. Sheriff Alderden would incorporate all employees into the decision-making process by giving them the respect and authority they deserve to identify problems and to correct them.

As his lasting legacy, he implemented the police department's motto of serving with the acronym PRIDE, which stands for Professionalism, Respect, Integrity, Duty, and Empowerment. Sheriff Alderden embodied these

virtues throughout his career. He also personifies these virtues on a personal level.

It is my great honor to stand here on the House floor honoring Sheriff Jim Alderden and thanking him for his service.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to 15 U.S.C. 1024(a), and the order of the House of January 5, 2011, the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment of the following Members of the House to the Joint Economic Committee:

Mr. BRADY, Texas, Chairman
Mr. BURGESS, Texas
Mr. CAMPBELL, California
Mr. DUFFY, Wisconsin
Mr. AMASH, Michigan
Mr. MULVANEY, South Carolina

HONORING HOUSE STAFFER MIKE WIEHE FOR HIS PUBLIC SERVICE

(Mr. TURNER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. TURNER. Mr. Speaker, as elected officials, all of us who serve in this Chamber have the honor of representing our constituents in public service. And as elected officials, we are also fortunate that some of our best and most able Americans choose to serve their Nation and their communities by working in our offices as congressional staffers.

In my office, I have a staffer who is leaving who I want to recognize here today.

Mike Wiehe first began working for me when I served as Mayor of Dayton and has continued to work for me and for the best interests of his community for the greater part of 12 years now.

Mike is a native of Celina, Ohio, and is a graduate of Celina Senior High School and of Wright State University. He has held literally almost every single position in my office: serving as scheduler, communications director, legislative assistant, military legislative assistant, legislative director, acting chief of staff, and finally, as district director and director of military affairs. He has excelled in each of these roles by always performing his job well and by leading his fellow staffers by example.

Mike's last day in my office will be January 31. I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking Mike for his tremendous service and for the huge sacrifices that he has made over the years in pursuit of public service.

Mike, we wish you all the best in all your future endeavors.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. McDERMOTT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. McDERMOTT addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

THE "RIDE PAST THE WRECKAGE" IN AFGHANISTAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, President Obama gave a stirring speech last night, most of which I agreed with, especially the calls for defense cuts; the investments in innovation, education, and infrastructure; and the elimination of oil company subsidies.

But given the sacrifice endured by the American people, I thought Afghanistan got short shrift—a mere two paragraphs.

The American Prospect magazine described the State of the Union as a "ride past the wreckage." I think that was because it applies to the State of the Union's treatment of Afghanistan.

The fact is that the training of Afghan security forces has been slow and ineffective. The inspector general for Afghanistan reconstruction said as much this very week. The Taliban remains a vital force in many pockets of Afghanistan, and the head of the Afghan NGO safety office reports a very precarious security situation.

The President was correct when he said that Afghanistan will need to provide better governance, but it's hard to see that happening with President Karzai regularly lashing out at us and, at one point, saying he would choose the Taliban over the United States and the international community.

Mr. Speaker, the American people are tired of being talked down to about this war, tired of being told everything is fine and under control, tired of being urged to stay the course, tired of talk about progress that seems to be little more than an illusion.

The President reiterated last night that we will begin to bring our troops home in July, but there's plenty of evidence to suggest we're ramping up this war instead of winding it down.

Earlier this month, for example, 1,400 additional marine combat forces were deployed, with the possibility of additional mini-surges during the spring, that would push our troop levels in Afghanistan to the 100,000 mark.

We're also using heavily armored tanks for the first time, and there are reports that we're considering expanding the war across the border in an unprecedented way, with risky and dangerous special operations ground raids into Pakistan.

Does this sound like a war that's drawing to a close?

Then in a trip to Afghanistan a few weeks ago, the Vice President suggested to his hosts that the occupation